

Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting
November 9, 2005
Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Richard Rasmussen, Rodney Sobin—Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Jim McKean—Department of Business Assistance (DBA)

Jennifer Wester—Department of Labor and Industry (DoLI)

A conflicting economic development event at the Richmond Airport in which a number of VaCAN participants were attending was noted.

Roundtable

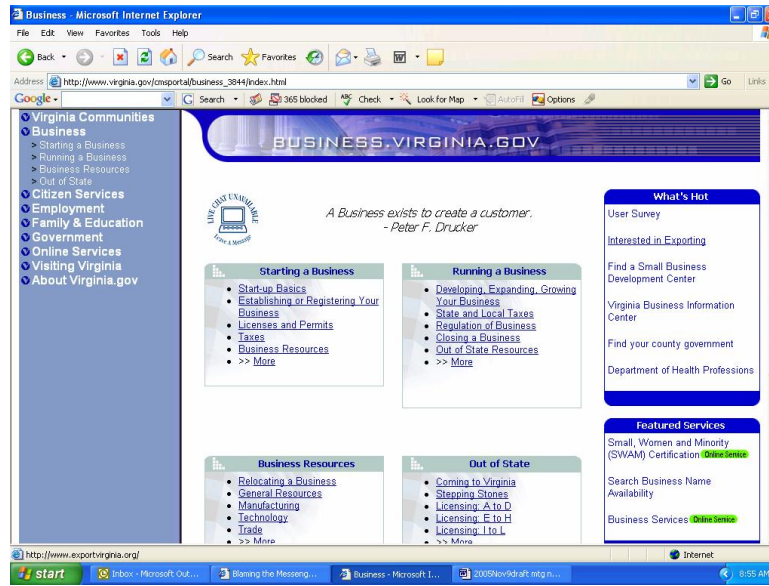
Richard Rasmussen gave an update on DEQ Small Business Assistance Program activities:

- DEQ's SBAP is considering outreach to small boiler operators to, possibly providing boiler tune-ups. Such a program would provide technical assistance on operational and energy efficiency.
- The SBAP and its counterparts from Maryland, District of Columbia, and West Virginia participated in a dry cleaning trade show and exposition near Dulles airport on 29-30 October. Numerous new environmentally preferable machines are being produced and sold. DEQ is a regular participant in this event which encompasses participants across the Mid-Atlantic region.
- DEQ has developed an auto body/collision repair self-certification program for Northern Virginia. The program, which produced a notebook and offered six workshops in Northern Virginia, includes educating shops on a new registration requirement, obligations under new air rules, requirements and best practices across environmental media, and the new Self-Certification Program. Participation in Self-Certification will give shops recognition by DEQ, reduced inspection frequency, and (still being worked on) access to painting technique and equipment training opportunities. Roughly 80 shops representing about a third of N. VA shops participated in the workshops. The Washington Metropolitan Auto Body Association is collaborating with the program.
 - OSHA and DoLI emphasis on worker safety and health for spray-on truck bed lining operations was discussed. Materials on this were provided at the workshops. DoLI is allowing a grace period to allow shops to engage the department on this issue through voluntary consultation.
 - There was discussion of how shops were identified via commercial databases and other means and how DoLI has similar challenges. One suggestion to enhance shop identification was to use material suppliers and auto dealers (who sometimes outsource work on contract in the case of truck bed lining).
 - DEQ is also engaging community college and vocational high school programs regarding collision repair to try to enhance instruction to student and working painters and to promote use of new environmentally favorable techniques and equipment.
 - There was discussion about health and safety concerns for students under 16 involved in vocational, construction, and other (art, theater, lab) activities and how DoLI is discussing such issues with the state Department of Education.

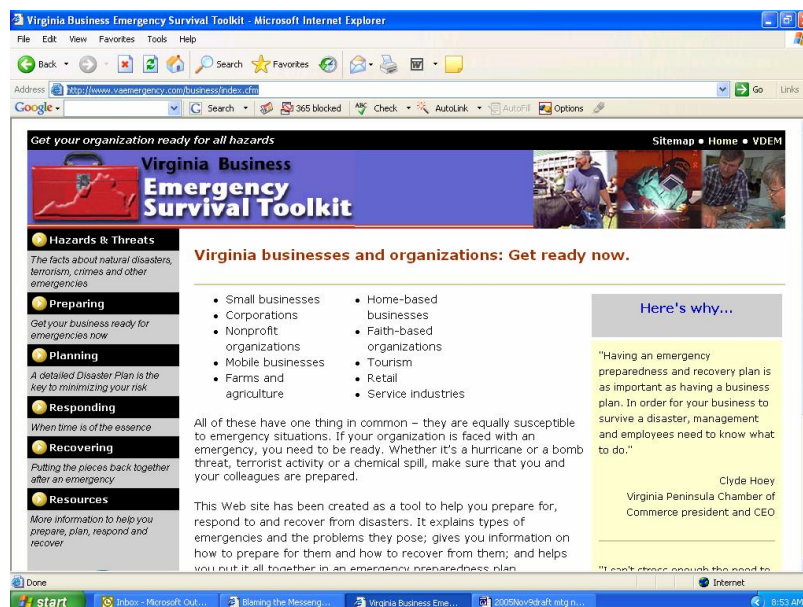
Jim McKean provided an update on DBA:

- DBA is working both with small, woman, and minority (SWAM) businesses and state agency procurement officers to encourage state procurement from SWAM businesses. This includes working with SWAM businesses on SWAM status registration and registration with the eVA state procurement system as well as raising awareness and identifying SWAM vendors to state agency procurement officers.

- DBA's quarterly seminar will take place at the Sheraton West, Richmond on 7 December. The event emphasizes existing businesses. Numerous agencies (including DEQ SBAP) and organizations will participate.
- A new state business web portal <http://business.virginia.gov> was demonstrated. The portal provides numerous links and resources for existing and new businesses in Virginia and for out-of-state businesses with or considering Virginia operations. It provides information and advice on starting and building businesses with links to appropriate agencies, Small Business Development Centers, localities, and other pertinent organizations. It provides a link to licensing, permitting, and other regulatory requirements; tax-related requirements, and business assistance services.



- The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Virginia Business Emergency Survival Toolkit website <http://www.vaemergency.com/business/index.cfm> was shown. The Toolkit provides information for businesses and other organizations to plan, prepare, respond, and recover from both natural and man-made emergencies and disasters in terms of human life and safety as well as continuity and recovery of business operations.



- DBA is enhancing its engagement with ethnically based business and community organizations as a means to reach out better to minority ethnic owned businesses, including to help surmount language and cultural impediments.

Jennifer Wester provided an update on DoLI:

- As noted above in the auto body shop discussion DoLI and OSHA have a new focus on spray-on truck bed liner application.
- Also noted above was discussion of concerns and dialogue with the Department of Education regarding health and safety of students under 16 participating in construction (e.g., Habitat for Humanity projects), vocational education shops, and other settings.
- DoLI has finally received full funding for its authorized level of enforcement positions. The Department is also developing a program of apprentice enforcement positions so that new inspectors can be better trained and mentored on the job. In the last federal fiscal year, about 33 inspectors performed approximately 3300 enforcement inspections and wrote about 6500 citations. The apprenticeship approach is not yet being developed for the voluntary consultation positions in the Department.
- Mr. Milford Stern, an industrial hygienist in DoLI's Roanoke office is now managing the VPP program, which recognizes exemplary occupational safety and health performance of larger firms (250+ employees or Virginia operation of national or international company). There are over 30 companies in the program, which has a recognition component as well as offering reduced inspection frequency. At this time the program is limited to manufacturing firms though the analogous federal program also includes construction contractors. (Increased fatalities in construction in Virginia[?] was noted as an aside.)

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 16, 2005 at DEQ's Piedmont Regional Office at 10:00 AM in the Training Room (Main Conference Room). **NOTE: January 16, 2006 is the Martin Luther King, Jr. legal holiday—meeting date will be rescheduled.**

Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at around 12:30 PM.